



**Quarterly Report**  
**INDONESIA: Establishing Democratic Civilian**  
**Control of the Military in Indonesia**

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**I. SUMMARY**

In the first quarter of 2002, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs' (NDI) program on governance and security in Indonesia continued efforts in strengthening the citizen understanding on issues pertinent to civilian oversight over the military. In February, NDI hosted a discussion with expert lecturer Dr. George Aditjondro on the impact of the new Foundations Law on the activities of military foundations, and on the steps civil society may take to better enforce the transparency and accountability measures the new law imposes on all foundations. Through this discussion, participating civil society activists acquired greater awareness of the threats and opportunities presented by the Foundations Law concerning oversight and control of military businesses.

**II. BACKGROUND**

The Indonesian National Military (TNI) has always seen itself as a military of the people, with an important role as a force for national unity. This belief is rooted in the military's role in gaining independence for Indonesia from the Netherlands between 1945 and 1949, and was later articulated in greater scope and detail as the ideology of *dwifungsi* (dual functions). *Dwifungsi*, unique in its ideological sophistication and historical justification, is the doctrine that specifically mandates a political and social role for the Indonesian military, in addition to the traditional military function of external defense. President Soeharto and the Indonesian military used *dwifungsi* during the New Order regime to justify the military's extensive role in politics and the withering of civilian control of the military. The resulting widespread corruption and human rights abuses have damaged the military's claims to popular legitimacy and thus compromised its credibility with both the political elite and the general public in Indonesia. This remains a serious problem for the sustainability of a democratic transition in Indonesia, both for military and civilian leaders.

Few concrete steps have been taken to reduce the military's role in politics on an institutional basis. Although the number has been cut in half, the military insisted on retaining appointed seats in the national legislature and regional assemblies through 2004, and an MPR decree assures their presence in the MPR through 2009. Many retired and some active officers remain seconded to the civilian bureaucracy. In addition, much of the repressive machinery of the New Order remains in place, even if it is not currently active.

During the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid, some steps were taken to reduce the political power of the Army and to re-establish civilian supremacy over the military, including the removal of General Wiranto from his position as Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security after an Indonesian human rights commission implicated him in the violence in East Timor. However, by early 2001, complications of financial scandal and possible impeachment caught Wahid under siege, and public contempt for the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) resumed a familiar pitch as the TNI gained a more unrestrained hand in the secessionist provinces of Aceh and Papua. The TNI's position in the process that removed Wahid from office in July 2001 has greatly contributed to a rebound in TNI's political influence. Many observers regard TNI's support for parliament against Wahid during the constitutional crisis as a debt that the new president, Megawati Sukarnoputri will not be allowed to forget.

One of the needs—toward the democratization of Indonesia—identified by both NDI and Indonesians themselves is to have a larger pool of civilians with expertise in defense and security affairs. A democratizing Indonesia needs training in such areas as: (1) the Ministry of Defense, whose important decision-making officials are currently all active or retired military officers; (2) the national legislature (DPR) as professional staff, especially those attached to Commission I (the equivalent of the Defense or Armed Services Committee); (3) provincial governments, as security advisers to governors, who with the implementation of regional autonomy policy and the state of emergency law will have greater responsibility for local security; (4) universities, as lecturers and researchers; (5) think tanks, as researchers; (6) mass media, as defense journalists; (7) NGOs relevant to the defense and security sector; and (8) other relevant institutions.

### **III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

#### ***Discussion on the Foundation Law and the Challenges for Regulating Military Business***

On February 21, 2002 NDI hosted a discussion with Dr. George Aditjondro, a lecturer at Newcastle University in Australia. The talk focused on the Foundations Law passed in August 2001 that requires all foundations to employ measures on transparency and accountability, and on the steps civil society may take to use the new law to explore the activities of military foundations. The new law is expected to come into force in August 2002. Twenty-two representatives from various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) attended the discussion held at NDI's office in Jakarta.

Dr. Aditjondro described how foundations, during the New Order regime, were used both for social activities and as mechanisms to gain personal or institutional wealth. He explained that although the new Foundations Law is meant to regulate both civilian and military foundations, the practice of the military's concept of dual function (*dwifungsi*) in national affairs would continue to legitimize the businesses of military foundations. The speaker expounded on how the existing framework has these foundations liable only to their founders, making it difficult to secure public accountability for their actions.

Dr. Aditjondro advocated that these problems may be countered by a more independent judiciary movement and the presence of more anti-corruption groups, at the national and

international level, focused on monitoring military foundations. He stressed that civil society should play a more active role in the campaign to abolish military businesses.

The talk involved discussion on how the Indonesian military is well postured in national politics, and how civil society faces considerable obstacles in implementing reform. Dr. Aditjondro encouraged participants to see the new Foundations Law as a wake-up call, and to organize a more structured approach to overseeing the activities of the military. NGOs need to identify the scope of military businesses, flag questionable business transactions, and strengthen the capacity of broader civil society to oversee and manage the behavior of the armed forces.

#### **IV. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Through the February discussion, civil society activists have acquired greater awareness of the threats and opportunities presented by the new Foundations Law concerning oversight and control of military businesses.

#### **V. EVALUATION/CONCLUSIONS**

***Objective:** To increase Indonesian legislators' and their staff members' ability to understand defense and civil-military issues.*

- None of the activities conducted in this quarter were directly related to this program objective.

***Objective:** To increase the Indonesian media's capacity to understand and accurately report on defense and civil-military issues.*

- None of the activities conducted in this quarter were directly related to this program objective.

***Objective:** To increase Indonesian academic institutions' capacity to conduct research and education on defense and civil-military issues.*

- None of the activities conducted in this quarter were directly related to this program objective.

***Objective:** To increase long-term dialogue and understanding between the military and members of civil society.*

- Through the discussion on the impact of the new Foundations Law, members of the NGO community gained a deeper understanding of the challenges civil society faces in implementing transparency and accountability among military foundations and businesses. Participants have also acquired awareness of the measures civil society may employ to counteract these challenges.

#### **VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

NDI's grant agreement with the Office of Transitional Initiatives (OTI) of the United States Agency for International Development expires this quarter. A final report on the program covering activities conducted from September 1999 to the end of this reporting period is forthcoming.